

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAA-02 MCE-00 ACDA-12 AID-05
EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /086 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/IAI:CHILL/MPH
APPROVED BY NEA:NVELIOTES
NEA/IAI:WBSMITH
PM:RERICSON
EA :HJFELDMAN

-----038949 070217Z /61

O R 070126Z JUL 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 171112

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: IS, US, TW, MASS, MILI

SUBJECT: U.S. POSITION ON SALE OF KFIR TO ROC

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REFS: A) STATE 169922, B) TAIPEI 04284, C) TEL AVIV 8459

1. DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING JULY 5 (REFTEL A) SUPERCEDES
ALL OTHER USG STATEMENTS AND SHOULD BE FOLLOWED IN ANSWER-
ING QUESTIONS.

2. MEDIA COVERAGE MAY HAVE CREATED IMPRESSION IN SOME
QUARTERS THAT KFIR SALE TO ROC IS SURE THING. IN YOUR
DEALINGS WITH ISRAELIS IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE CLEAR THAT,
AS SPOKESMAN SAID, WE WOULD LOOK FAVORABLY ON SUCH A SALE
IF THE ROC IN FACT IS INTERESTED IN KFIR AND A CONTRACTUAL
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AGREEMENT BETWEEN ISRAELIS AND CHINESE CAN BE REACHED. THE
USG, OF COURSE, WILL ALSO PROPOSE SALE OF U.S. FIGHTERS TO
ROC, ALTHOUGH DECISION AS TO WHICH AIRCRAFT HAS NOT YET
BEEN MADE.

3. FYI: IN PAST, KFIR GENERALLY HAS BEEN EQUATED WITH

F-4 PHANTOM. ISRAEL AIRCRAFT INDUSTRIES REPRESENTATIVES IN RECENT MONTHS HAVE SOUGHT TO PORTRAY KFIR AS F-5-TYPE AIRCRAFT IN HOPE THAT DOING SO WOULD AFFECT U.S. DECISION. IN FACT, DECISION AND INDEED THE KFIR AIRCRAFT ITSELF WOULD BE BETTER REGARDED AS SUI GENERIS; THIS DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A PRECEDENT FOR OTHER SUCH DECISIONS.

4. WHETHER USG APPROVES EITHER F-4S OR "ENHANCED" F-5ES FOR ROC (WHICH ALREADY COPRODUCE STANDARD F-5ES), CHINESE WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE RANGE OF CHOICES: CONTINUE TO AVOID KFIR FOR REASONS CITED PARA 3 OF REFTEL B; CHOOSE U.S. AIRCRAFT AS ALTERNATIVE TO KFIR; OR CHOOSE BOTH KFIR AND U.S. FIGHTERS. IN ANY EVENT, IT IS IMPORTANT TO QUASH ANY SIGNS OF BELIEF THAT U.S. POSITION ON KFIR FOR TAIWAN GIVES ISRAEL CLEAR FIELD. WHICHEVER WAY DECISION ON U.S. AIRPLANES FOR ROC COMES OUT, ISRAEL WILL FACE COMPETITION FOR ROC MARKET.

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Message Attributes

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